

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated September 21, 2005, has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 1-25 are rejected to by the Examiner. Claims 12, 16, and 20 have been amended, and claim 21 has been canceled. Claims 1-20 and 22-25 remain pending in this application.

In the Office Action, claims 12 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 second paragraph. Claims 1, 2, 13, 18, and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0190630 to Lee et al. (hereinafter "Lee"). Claims 20-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,765,248 to Belica (hereinafter "Belica"). Claims 3-7 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,730,145 to van der Meer et al. (hereinafter "van der Meer"). Claims 8-12 and 14-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee in view of Belica. Claims 23-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Belica in view of van der Meer.

Claims 12 and 16 have been amended to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112 second paragraph and are now allowable.

The rejection of claims 1, 2, 13, 18, and 19 is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. Claims 1, 2, 13, 18, and 19 are allowable over the cited references in that each of these claims recites a combination of elements including, for example, "wherein along a cross section perpendicular to an axis of the funnel, a thickness of the attaching portion of the core is different from a thickness of a portion of the core proximate a portion of the funnel fastened to the panel". Lee does not teach or suggest at least this feature of the claimed invention. In Lee the core 44 is not a split core, so there is no attaching portion for this core 44. Therefore, there can be no difference in thickness as claimed in the present invention. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 2, 13, 18, and 19 are allowable over the cited references.

Claims 3-12 and 14-17 are also allowable over over Lee for the same reasons stated above with respect to claim 1. Further, van der Meer and Belica fail to cure the deficiencies of Lee, therefore claims 3-12 and 14-17 are allowable over Lee, van der Meer, and Belica.

The rejection of claims 20 and 22 is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. Claims 20 and 22 are allowable over the cited references in that each of these claims

recites a combination of elements including, for example, "attachment grooves adjacent the attachment portion wherein the thickness of the split cores between the attachment grooves is different than a thickness of a portion of the split cores defining the first opening". Belica does not teach or suggest at least this feature of the claimed invention. The Examiner identifies 31 and 32 as attachment grooves. Actually 31 and 32 are spring clips. The cores of Belica do not have attachment grooves. Therefore, there can be no difference in thickness as claimed in the present invention. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 20 and 22 are allowable over the cited references.

Claims 23-25 are also allowable over Belica for the same reasons stated above with respect to claim 20. Further, van der Meer fails to cure the deficiencies of Belica, therefore claims 3-12 and 14-17 are allowable over Belica and van der Meer.

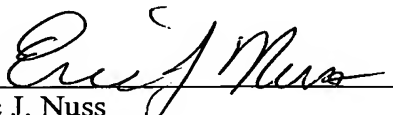
Applicants believe the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. *A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.*

Respectfully submitted,

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